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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/775,048 | 02/09/2004 | Richard L. Giroux | WEAT/0359.P1 | 8979 |

7590 04/19/2007
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| EXAMINER |
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DANG, HOANG C

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| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
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3672

| SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE | MAIL DATE | DELIVERY MODE |
|--|------------|---------------|
| 3 MONTHS | 04/19/2007 | PAPER |

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/775,048

Applicant(s)

GIROUX ET AL.

Examiner

Hoang Dang

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 January 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 29,30,39-45 and 49-94 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 79-84 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 29,30,39-45,49-60,63-69 and 72-78 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 61 and 85-88 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 62,70,71 and 89-94 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 79-84 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date See Continuation Sheet.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Continuation of Attachment(s) 3). Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08), Paper No(s)/Mail Date :10/4/06 (2); 6/26/06; 12/1/06; 2/23/07.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. The numbering of claims is not in accordance with 37 CFR 1.126 which requires the original numbering of the claims to be preserved throughout the prosecution. When claims are canceled, the remaining claims must not be renumbered. When new claims are presented, they must be numbered consecutively beginning with the number next following the highest numbered claims previously presented (whether entered or not).

Misnumbered claims 74-95 have been treated as claims 73-94.

Election/Restrictions

2. Newly submitted claims 79-84 are directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons: The apparatus as defined by the newly added claims 79-84 can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the apparatus or drill bit can be used simply for drilling a borehole (i.e., it is removed from the borehole after it is formed).

Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claims 79-84 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

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4. Claims 61 and 85-88 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Glowka (US 5,343,968) (see “earth removal member” 14, “fluid passage” 15 and “secondary fluid passage” 43 and “one way valve” 42; and column 6, line 43 through column 8, line 29).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

6. Claims 29, 30, 32, 37 and 40-46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee (US 2004/0011566) in view of Runia et al ‘218 or Glowka ‘968.

Lee discloses the invention as claimed (i.e., “one way valve” 6) except that it is not disclosed in Lee that the lost circulation material can be a physically alterable bonding material. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use such a physically alterable bonding material to control lost circulation of drilling mud because it is well known in the art to use a cementitious material to control lost circulation during a drilling operation as evidenced by Runia et al (see paragraph [0004]) or Glowka (see column 1, line 62 through column 2, line 12).

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claims 29, 30, 39-45, 49-60, 63-69, 72-78 are allowed.

8. Claims 62, 70, 71 and 89-94 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

9. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

10. This application contains claims 79-84 drawn to an invention nonelected by original presentation. A complete reply to the final rejection must include cancellation of nonelected claims or other appropriate action (37 CFR 1.144) See MPEP § 821.01.

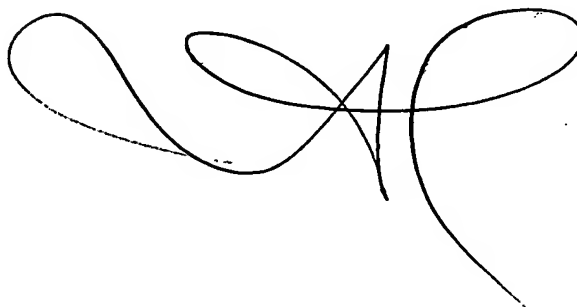
11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hoang Dang whose telephone number is 571-272-7028. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:15-5:45 Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bagnell can be reached on 571-272-6999. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Hoang Dang
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3672

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long trailing stroke, positioned below the printed name and title.